

- The right to request confidentiality for yourself and family members including home, school, and work addresses and phone numbers. The confidentiality request must be made to the assistant district attorney as soon as possible, preferably before or during the arraignment.
- The right to be present at all court proceedings unless you are required to testify and the judge determines that your testimony might be influenced by your presence in the court.
- The right to give a Victim Impact Statement at sentencing to inform the court about the physical, emotional and financial impact of the crime and provide your opinion regarding sentencing of the defendant.
- The right to financial assistance: the right to apply for victim compensation to help pay for certain out-of-pocket expenses including medical, dental and mental health counseling expenses, lost wages, and funeral expenses up to \$4000; the right to request restitution for a financial loss, property loss or physical injury; the right to receive a witness fee if you are summonsed to appear in court.

Adults with disabilities experience violence/abuse at least twice as often as people without disabilities (Sobsey, Dick (1994))

Essex County Offices District Attorney Jonathan W. Blodgett Victim Witness Services

**Main Office (978) 745-6610
TTY (978) 741-3163
mass.gov/essexda**

Gloucester District Court
197 Main Street
Gloucester, MA 01930
(978) 283-3701

Haverhill District Court
James P. Ginty Blvd.
Haverhill, MA 01830
(978) 374-0380

Ipswich District Court
188 State Street
Newburyport, MA 01950
(978) 462-3511

Lawrence District Court
Fenton Judicial Center
Two Appleton Street
Lawrence, MA 01840
(978) 683-4300

Lawrence Domestic Violence Unit
Fenton Judicial Center
Two Appleton Street
Lawrence, MA 01840
(978) 683-4300

Lawrence Juvenile Court
10 Railroad Avenue
Lawrence, MA 01841
(978) 725-8810

Lynn District Court
580 Essex Street
Lynn, MA 01901
(781) 593-1850

Lynn Domestic Violence Unit
LEO Building
100 Willow St.
Lynn, MA 01901
(781) 599-8094

Lynn Juvenile Court
139 Central Avenue
Lynn, MA 01901
(781) 599-3890

Newburyport District Court
188 State Street
Newburyport, MA 01950
(978) 462-3511

Peabody District Court
One Lowell Street
Peabody, MA 01960
(978) 532-4140

Salem District Court
65 Washington Street
Salem, MA 01970
(978) 744-5681

Salem Juvenile Court
45 Congress Street
Salem, MA 01970
(978) 744-1562

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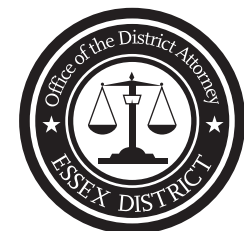
Essex District Attorney

Jonathan W. Blodgett

VICTIM SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



YOUR RIGHTS AND THE COURT PROCESS



A Message From The District Attorney



Studies indicate that people with disabilities are at a higher risk of criminal victimization than those without disabilities. As Essex District Attorney, I am committed to ensuring that crimes against persons

with disabilities are thoroughly investigated and prosecuted to the full extent of the law. These cases are handled by assistant district attorneys and victim witness advocates who are specially trained to work with you or your loved one in a sensitive and appropriate manner. My Office has partnered with the Disabled Persons Protection Commission, the Department of Mental Retardation, the Department of Mental Health, the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission and local police departments so these cases are investigated in a timely manner to prevent further abuse and hold perpetrators accountable.

I am pleased to offer this brochure to help inform you of services that are available as well as to explain some basic information about the criminal justice system. If you have any questions, I encourage you to contact a victim witness advocate in my Office. Advocates are located in each court throughout the county. I am sorry that you or someone you care about has suffered as a result of a crime.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jonathan W. Blodgett". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light background.

Jonathan W. Blodgett
District Attorney

Building Partnerships

In an effort to more effectively and efficiently address the issues of abuse and neglect of persons with disabilities, law enforcement and human service agencies formed a partnership called the "Building Partnerships for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities." This initiative provides equal access to the criminal justice system and recognition for crime victims with disabilities. The agencies involved are: District Attorney's Office, law enforcement, Disabled Persons Protection Commission, Department of Mental Retardation, Department of Mental Health, Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission.

The Multidisciplinary Team

In some cases, a crime may be investigated using a multidisciplinary team. The team consists of caseworkers, police officers, assistant district attorneys, victim witness advocates and an interview specialist. All of these professionals are sensitive to the difficult and confusing time that you or the victim may be experiencing. The caseworker will assess the safety and protection of the victim. The interview specialist will ask the victim questions and be part of the team discussion following the interview. The police officer from the location where the alleged incident occurred along with the assistant district attorney will determine if a crime has been committed and what other investigative steps must be taken. The victim witness advocate will inform you or the victim of the course of action the team has recommended. The advocate will be the victim's link to the court system, if and when criminal action is taken. The team's overall goal is to complete the investigation in a sensitive, timely and professional manner and reduce the number of times the victim is interviewed.

The Essex Victim Witness Services Program of District Attorney Jonathan W. Blodgett's Office provides information, services and referrals to crime victims, their family members, and witnesses as mandated by Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 258B, the Victim Rights Law.

The Victim Bill of Rights (M.G.L. c. 258B) provides certain rights to victims, their family members and witnesses. To ensure that you receive your rights, including notification and information, please be sure to provide the victim witness advocate or prosecutor with your current address and phone number. **The following rights may apply to you:**

- The right to be informed about the criminal case and how it progresses through the court; to know your role, what is expected of you, and why; to receive timely notice of court dates and continuances; to know your rights and the services available to help you.
- The right to speak with the prosecutor before the case starts, before the case is dismissed, and before a sentence recommendation is made to the court; the right to be notified of the final disposition of the case and explanation of the sentence imposed.